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## THE FAMILY HUNTING BAND AS THE BASIS OF ALGONKIAN SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

By FRANK G. SPECK

THE following paper is intended in a preliminary way to make available to ethnologists the results of certain economic and social investigations in an important but hitherto neglected topic: the family group as a fundamental social unit among the hunting tribes of the northern woodlands. The idea has always prevailed, without bringing forth much criticism, that, in harmony with other primitive phenomena, the American Indians had little or no interest in the matter of claims and boundaries to the land which they inhabited. This notion has, in fact, been generally presupposed for all native tribes who have followed a hunting life, to accord with the common impression that a hunter has to range far, and wherever he may, to find game enough to support his family.

Whether or not the hunting peoples of other continents, or even of other parts of America, have definite concepts regarding individual or group ownership of territory, I should at least like to show that the Indian tribes of eastern and northern North America did have quite definite claims to their habitat. Moreover, as we shall see, these claims existed even within the family groups composing the tribal communities. There is, indeed, considerable significance in the fact that these tracts were remotely inherited in the families and that they were well known by definite bounds not only among the owners but among the neighboring groups. In many cases they were also associated with certain social clan groupings within the tribe. It would seem, then, that such features characterize actual ownership of territory.

One of the results of my ethnological explorations in the interests of the Geological Survey of Canada among the tribes of the northern and northeastern United States and Canada, has been to trace the

distribution of the family hunting claims and to study the social side of the institution, which is, to be sure, a fundamental one, among all the Algonkian people. Accordingly, I feel safe in presenting this preliminary report of the ethno-geographical material now, having pursued my objective studies through the tribes from the Atlantic seaboard in Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, Maine, the South Labrador coast, and provinces of Quebec and Ontario as far west as Mattagama river and north to Lake Abittibi beyond the Height of Land dividing the Arctic and St Lawrence watershed.

Before entering upon the specific material from different tribes, let me define the family hunting group as a kinship group composed of folks united by blood or marriage, having the right to hunt, trap, and fish in a certain inherited district bounded by some rivers, lakes, or other natural landmarks. These territories, as we shall call them, were, moreover, often known by certain local names identified with the family itself. The whole territory claimed by each tribe was subdivided into tracts owned from time immemorial by the same families and handed down from generation to generation. The almost exact bounds of these territories were known and recognized, and trespass, which, indeed, was of rare occurrence, was summarily punishable. These family groups or bands form the social units of most of the tribes, having not only the ties of kinship but a community of land and interests. In some tribes these bands have developed into clans with prescribed rules of marriage, some social taboos and totemic emblems. Such, then, is the general aspect of this institution.

Regarding the territorial bounds, I indeed found them so well established and definite that it has been possible to show on maps the exact tract of country claimed by each family group. The districts among the Algonkian seem to average between two and four hundred square miles to each family in the main habitat, while on the tribal frontiers they may average from two to four times as large. I have already prepared such maps of the Penobscot territory in Maine, the Montagnais and Mistassini of Quebec, the Timiskaming and Nipissing in Ontario, the Micmac of Nova Scotia and

Newfoundland, and the Lake Dumoine, Timagami, Matachewan and Mattawa bands of Algonkian and Ojibwa in Ontario and Quebec.<sup>1</sup> In only one instance so far in my investigations have I found this institution occurring among the Iroquois. In this case the Mohawk of the Oka band have a few family hunting territories, the idea evidently having been borrowed from the Algonkin occupying the same reserve. I could not find any traces of the institution among the Cherokee of North Carolina. Mr E. W. Hawkes informs me, concerning the Eskimo of Labrador, that, while aware that their Indian neighbors maintain the hunting territory system, they have not taken it up themselves.

In the west and north several authors refer in more or less definite terms to the institution. Harmon (1800) describes it among the Cree,<sup>2</sup> while now and then we can detect its occurrence in the regions covered by the reports of later ethnologists.<sup>3</sup> As might

<sup>1</sup> "Family Hunting Territories and Social Life of Various Algonkian Bands of the Ottawa Valley," *Memoir, Geological Survey of Canada* (in press).

<sup>2</sup> D. W. Harmon, *Journal of Voyages and Travels in the Interior of North America* (New York, 1903), p. 330-1.

"Every tribe has its particular tract of country; and this is divided again, among the several families, which compose the tribe. Rivers, lakes, and mountains, serve them as boundaries; and the limits of the territory which belongs to each family are as well known by the tribe, as the lines which separate farms are, by the farmers in the civilized world. The Indians who reside in the large plains, make no subdivisions of their territory; for the wealth of their country consists of buffaloes and wolves . . . But the case is otherwise with the inhabitants of the woody countries . . . should they destroy all these animals in one season, they would cut off their means of subsistence. A prudent Indian whose lands are not well stocked with animals, kills only what are absolutely necessary to procure such articles as he cannot well dispense with."

<sup>3</sup> V. Stefánsson, *Anthropological Papers, American Museum of Natural History*, XIV, part 1 (1914), p. 271. "Each group (Athapascan) then kept very strictly to their own hunting grounds and only in extreme need followed game into a neighbor's territory. . . ."

H. J. Spinden, "The Nez Percé Indians" *Memoirs American Anthropological Association*, II, p. 242. "The Nez Percé tribe was divided into bands upon the village or geographical basis. Each village had its chief, its fishing place and its strip of territory along the river."

Clark Wissler, "The Social Life of the Blackfoot Indians," *Anthropological Papers, American Museum of Natural History*, VII, part 1, p. 20. "When two or more bands chose to occupy immediate parts of the same valley, their camps are segregated and, if possible, separated by a brook, a point of highland, or other natural barrier. The scattering of bands during the winter was an economic necessity, a practice accentuated among the Thick-wood Cree and other similar tribes. Something was lost in defensive powers but this was doubtless fully offset by greater immunity from starvation."

indeed be expected, the tribes of the Plains area do not have the institution so far as I have learned incidentally from a few informants. From the allusions in literature, however, we might suspect its general distribution in the Plateau and in the northern or Mackenzie area.

We have reason to know, moreover, from early historical writings, that the typical institution of the hunting territory, with vested rights, so characteristic even today among the tribes of Canada, held sway among the Algonkian kindred as far south as southern New England. This brings the institution well within the limits of the region concerned in the treaty negotiations of our

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Finally in this connection attention might be called to the significant passages in the works of R. H. Lowie on "The Northern Shoshone," *Anthropological Papers of the American Museum of Natural History*, II, part II, p. 208 and on "The Assiniboine"; in those of A. L. Kroeber on the Algonkian Gros Ventre, and in those of A. B. Skinner dealing with the northern Plains-Cree and Ojibwa. Cf. "Notes on the Eastern Cree and Northern Saulteaux" *Anthropological Papers of the American Museum of Natural History*, IX, part I, p. 150. "Every adult male Northern Saulteaux has a certain well-known range over which he has the exclusive right of trapping and hunting game, known as 'Tzikéwin' a word corresponding to home. This, by exception to the general rule of maternal inheritance, descends at his death to his nearest living relative, male or female in order of age. . . . The rules regarding the punishment for violation of the law against hunting on another man's lands are said to have been very strict at one time, but are now lax, although hard feelings and even blows frequently result from transgression."

Quite definitely, indeed, can we interpret the meaning of what Roger Williams wrote of the Narragansett in Rhode Island in 1643 in his quaint style, *Key into the Language of America*, Roger Williams (London, 1643).

P. 189. "Secondly, they hunt by Traps of severall sorts, to which purpose, after they have observed in spring time and summer the haunt of the Deere then about Harvest, they goe ten or twentie together, and sometimes more, and withall build up little hunting houses of barks and rushes, . . . and so each man takes his bounds of two, three or foure miles where he sets thirty, forty or fifty traps and baits his traps with that food the Deere loves and once in two days he walks his round to view his traps."

Further on, he remarks,

P. 193. "Pumpom: a tribute skin when a Deere is killed in the Water. This skin is carried to the Sachim or Prince within whose territory the Deere was slain."

Also, quoting *Good Newes from New England, Young's Chronicle of Plymouth*, pp. 361-2, cited in footnote in same edition, p. 193, Roger Williams Key, etc.

"Every Sachim knoweth how far the bounds and limits of his own country extendeth; and that is his own proper inheritance. . . . In this circuit whosoever hunteth, if they kill any venison, bring him his fee; which is the fore parts of the same, if it be killed on the land, but if in the water, then the skin thereof."

colonial government. Furthermore, on the assumption that the ethnically related Algonkian inhabiting southward into Virginia were organized similarly, we may have to conclude that all of the Atlantic coast tribes maintained the same institution.

Another feature of economic importance in the institution of the family hunting territory is the conservation of resources practised by the natives. In their own régime this means the conservation of the game. Let us consult, for example, the native regulations governing the treatment of the hunting territories among the northern Ojibwa and the Montagnais of the province of Quebec who are often accused of being improvident as regards the killing of game, notwithstanding the fact that they depend upon it for their living. The Montagnais subsist entirely upon the products of the hunt, trading the furs that they obtain during the winter for the necessities of life at the Hudson's Bay Company's posts. Accompanied by his family, the Montagnais hunter operates through a certain territory, known as his "hunting ground" (*oti'tawin*), the boundaries determined by a certain river, the drainage of some lake, or the alignment of some ridge. This is his family inheritance, handed down from his ancestors. Here in the same district his father hunted before him and here also his children will gain their living. Despite the continued killing in the tract each year the supply is always replenished by the animals allowed to breed there. There is nothing astonishing in this to the mind of the Indian because the killing is definitely regulated so that only the increase is consumed, enough stock being left each season to insure a supply for the succeeding year. In this manner the game is "farmed," so to speak, and the continued killing through centuries does not affect the stock fundamentally. It can readily be seen that the thoughtless slaughter of game in one season would spoil things for the next and soon bring the proprietor to famine.

The Montagnais depend largely upon the beaver, as there are very few moose and caribou in their country. The beaver to them is like the bison to the Plains Indians, or the reindeer to the Arctic tribes. The meat of the beaver is delicious and substantial and replaces pork very advantageously. If the hunter fall sick in the forest far from aid, he finds the castoreum a beneficial remedy. Different from the other beasts the beaver does not wander about and require to be hunted;

he builds his "cabin" in plain sight upon the very path of the hunter, in the river or lake. Instinctively, the hunter understands how to operate with a natural law, which no game commission can improve on, and to maintain the beaver there for his subsistence. He understands, moreover, that he cannot abuse his opportunity. Thus it is that the Indian, obeying a natural law of conservation, which is worth more than any written law to him, never destroys all the members of a beaver family. He knows enough to spare a sufficient number for the continuation of the family and the propagation of the colony. He takes care of the beaver as well as other animals, that live in his family territory, as a farmer does of his breeders. He can, indeed, tell at any time the number of animals which he can dispose of each year in his district without damaging his supply.<sup>1</sup>

The testimony of an Ojibwa chief at Lake Temagami, Ontario, is interesting because it gives us a first-hand translation of the actual statements of an Indian authority himself. Accordingly, I offer part of the speech of Chief Aleck Paul.

In the early times the Indians owned this land, where they lived, bounded by the lakes, rivers, and hills, or determined by a certain number of days' journey in this direction or that. Those tracts formed the hunting grounds owned and used by the different families. Wherever they went the Indians took care of the game animals, especially the beaver, just as the Government takes care of the land today. So these families of hunters would never think of damaging the abundance or the source of supply of the game, because that had come to them from their fathers and grandfathers and those behind them. It is, on the other hand, the white man who needs to be watched. He makes the forest fires, he goes through the woods and kills everything he can find, whether he needs its flesh or not, and then when all the animals in one section are killed he takes the train and goes to another where he can do the same.

We Indian families used to hunt in a certain section for beaver. We would only kill the small beaver and leave the old ones to keep breeding. Then when they got too old, they too would be killed, just as a farmer kills his pigs, preserving the stock for his supply of young. The beaver was the Indians' pork; the moose, his beef; the partridge, his chicken; and there was the caribou or red deer, that was his sheep. All these formed the stock on his family hunting ground, which would be parceled out among the sons when the owner died. He said to his sons, "You take this part; take care of this tract; see that it always produces enough." That was what my grandfather told us. His land was divided among two sons, my father and Pishabo (Tea Water), my uncle. We were to own this land so no other Indians could hunt on it. Other Indians could go there and travel through it, but could not go there to kill the beaver. Each family had its own district where it belonged, and owned the game. That was

<sup>1</sup> Quoting a statement prepared by the Montagnais of Lake St John.

each one's stock for food and clothes. If another Indian hunted on our territory we, the owners, could shoot him. This division of the land started in the beginning of time, and always remained unchanged. I remember about twenty years ago some Nipissing Indians came north to hunt on my father's land. He told them not to hunt beaver. "This is our land," he told them; "you can fish but must not touch the fur, as that is all we have to live on." Sometimes an owner would give permission for strangers to hunt for a certain time in a certain tract. This was often done for friends or when neighbors had had a poor season. Later the favor might be returned.

Having already given, in brief abstract form, the contents of some of my detailed reports, it may be well to continue in the same way by presenting condensed material showing the nature of the territorial institution among the various tribes embraced within the area of American and Canadian colonial movements.

#### TIMISKAMING BAND OF ALGONKIN

On the northern and eastern shores of Lake Timiskaming forming the inter-colonial boundary between Ontario and Quebec, are the Algonkin known as the Timiskaming band. These people seem to be a northern offshoot of the Algonkin of the Ottawa river. Many general features of the hunting territory system are repeated in the material coming from this group. There are seven original families in which the names are handed down by paternal descent. Here, as elsewhere, a common family hunting territory in which all the male members share the right of hunting and fishing, constitutes the main bond of union in the social life of the tribe. Hunting outside of the family territory was often punishable by death. More often, however, trespass was punished by conjuring against the offender's life or health. Each family, it seems, had some shaman in its ranks who could be called upon to work evil against intruders upon such occasions. Permission, nevertheless, was often given to hunt in neighboring territory; especially in times when the game supply might be impoverished, exchanges were made through courtesy. We find here rules for travelers in passing through strange territories. Permission was generally sought at the owner's headquarters before passing through his district and if, by necessity, game had been killed to sustain life the pelts were delivered to



the owners. Economically, these family territories in the Timiskaming band were regulated in a very wise and interesting manner. The game was kept account of quite closely, the proprietors knowing about how abundant each kind of animal was. Hence, they could regulate the killing so as not to deplete the stock. Beaver were made the object of the most careful "farming," an account being kept of the numbers of occupants old and young to each "cabin." In certain districts moose or caribou were protected during one year to give them a chance to increase after a period of hunting.

The totemic organization in the Timiskaming band is too decadent to furnish much material for study. There are the remains of three totems, the kingfisher, rattlesnake, and caribou. There is reason to suppose that these were introduced by intermarriage with the Timagami band. Nevertheless in this case, the family divisions are not primarily concerned with totemism. The main point here is that the hunting territory groups have developed by inheritance from individual proprietors irrespective of totemic groupings. No taboos of diet or killing are found in these family groups. They are purely social and economic. Some of the families forming the Timiskaming band originally came from the Matachewan band of Ojibwa, others have come from the Abittibi country, and others are derived from the Timagami. From our study in this group it is safe to conclude that the pressure on the Timiskaming territory has been constantly from the west, the result of the continuous northward and eastward drift of the Ojibwa from the region of Lake Huron and Superior. This study, besides giving us a definite boundary line for the Algonkin on the west, also provides us with a concrete and presumably accurate illustration of how territorial encroachments occur among the natives, accompanied by intermarriage and interchange of customs.

The Timiskaming people, too, have only in recent years come under the Dominion regulations, their land having been ceded in the usual way so that now only a few families retain the right to hunt at all times in their inherited districts. My investigations among the neighboring bands of Algonkin are not very extensive, but we may presume from the fact that to the southeast the Du-

moine river and Kipawa bands of the same group have the same social system that the whole Algonkin group was characterized by it. I found eight families forming these groups. Their territory extended as far east as Coulonge river which takes us fairly close to the country that is now settled, and where at first appearance one would hardly expect to find traces of aboriginal family claims. It may not be too futile to hope that in the further prosecution of these researches among the diffused remnants of the original owners, we may be able to plot out claims lying further to the south in what has been thickly settled country for some years.

#### TIMAGAMI BAND

My best opportunity for investigating the social and economic organization was afforded by the Ojibwa of the Timagami band located at the Hudson's Bay Post on Bear island of Lake Timagami. In my survey of the region I followed the line of contact between the Algonkin, Ojibwa, and Cree from Lake Nipissing northward, obtaining data from three or four of the intervening bands. The Timagami people offered a rather attractive opportunity because they had maintained the hunting territory system up to the present, and this, together with the small size of the band, ninety-five souls, enabled me to plan inquiries on a number of points concerning the life of the individual and the social group in a fairly concrete way. The Timagami band is the offshoot of Ojibwa of the Great Lakes. Their present habitat is about Lake Timagami. There are fourteen families that form the group. As might be expected, the family hunting territory is of primary importance here as it is throughout the whole region occupied by the northern Algonkin hunting tribes. We find the general characteristics of this type represented here by family proprietorship in the districts, retaliation against trespass, conservation of animal resources, and certain regulations governing inheritance and marriage among the families. The districts of these family groups are fairly definite, bounded by lakes, rivers, ridges, and often groves of certain trees, being exceedingly well known and respected by all the hunters, under a very strong sense of proprietorship. The Timagami even went so far as to divide

their districts into quarters, each year the family hunting in a different quarter in rotation, leaving a tract in the center as a sort of bank not to be hunted over unless forced to do so by a shortage in the regular tract. These quarters were criss-crossed by blazed trails leading to the temporary camps. The Timagami called one of these territories *nda'k'im*, "my land".

While omitting the detailed discussion of other social phenomena a few words are needed to show how the clan system existed side by side with the hunting territorial system. Here there were four clans, the Loon, Kingfisher, Rattlesnake, and, of recent years, the Beaver, brought in by an immigrant family from Lake Nipissing. In these clans descent is reckoned through the father and the exogamic regulation prevails. They do not believe in descent from the totem, but it is regarded as a mark of identity to the members of the band. There is no association, outwardly, between the clans and the family bands. We infer, however, that the bands have increased by subdivision from the original founders who were members of three migrating clans. An examination of the territory as plotted on the map, which embraces a large area from Lake Nipissing to Height of Land, shows that these people are part of a northern and western movement of Ojibwa-speaking bands spreading from the Great Lakes to the newer hunting grounds which lie further from the territory now being despoiled of their game by encroaching settlements.

Still further information from the Ojibwa of Minnesota shows that essentially the same institution occurs among the bands there. From William Potter, *Pátigos*, of the Gull Lake band, I obtained a list of family hunting territories with boundaries marked on a map giving the proprietorships of certain districts on what is now the White Earth reserve. The territories here are relatively small compared to those in Canada, averaging about 100 square miles. The Minnesota family hunting claims include also the exclusive rights to the maple sugar bush and fishing waters lying within the boundaries of the tracts. On large open lakes the fishing is unrestricted. Trespass regulations are here also not at all strict. Courtesy even hardly requires travelers to secure permission from

the owners to hunt on their claims. In this particular part of Minnesota, however, the removal of other bands of Ojibwa since about 1870 to the White Earth reserve has had considerable effect upon the local institution, particularly in necessitating a redistribution in smaller parcels of the territories left among the Indians. An interesting fact is brought out by a comparison of the family territories here, which I learned of quite accidentally, and those of the Ontario Ojibwa. For it seems that many family and individual proprietary names are common to both areas, indicating that certain national family names occur throughout the Ojibwa. The same thing is manifested in the bands of the Algonkin. Comparison based on this class of material, much of which yet remains to be collected, may show whether these names are restricted to certain clans.

South of the St Lawrence, in the region east of that just dealt with, the country has been in the hands of the white man for many generations, yet some of the most interesting material is alive in the memory of the original Indian inhabitants. The Abenaki of St Francis, Canada, comprise the amalgamated fragments of the historic Wawenock, Norridgewock, Aroosaguntacook and other bands driven from southern Maine and New Hampshire in the eighteenth century. A visit to this village showed that some of the old family claims in the neighborhood of Moosehead lake, Maine, are still remembered. Although I am not ready to report in detail as yet, the Indians will soon have a map marked out for me showing the former territorial claims of their people.

#### PENOBSCOT

In regard to the Penobscot who inhabit the Penobscot river valley in Maine, we encounter some interesting social and economic phenomena. In the old days their hunting territories, which are called *Nzi'bum*, "my river", bordered on the east those of the Aroosaguntacook, now the St Francis Abenaki, just mentioned. Almost all of the traditional twenty-two families of the tribe are still represented by descendants numbering something over four hundred. The usual rules against trespass, the usual habit of

spending the winter in the hunting grounds and gathering for the tribal rendezvous in the spring and fall, and the typical grouping of the family members into bands in which the territories were inherited, are all found here as elsewhere among the northern tribes. Passing from this common phase we find much more in the social aspect that is distinctive to the tribe.

To begin with, the human family groups were believed to be intimately related to certain land and sea animals, the relationship being accounted for by a myth of the transformer cycle of which an abstract will have to be given before proceeding further.

The mythical transformer, *Gluska'be*, "The Deceiver", in the course of his career about the world, encounters a village of his people, as he calls them, who are dying of thirst occasioned by the cupidity of a monster frog-like creature (*Anglebe'mu*, "Guards the water"). "The Deceiver" proceeds to the abode of this monster and orders him to disgorge the water which he is holding back from the world. Upon refusal "The Deceiver" kills the creature and fells a yellow birch tree upon him. The water released from the monster then flows down the branches and trunk of the tree and thenceforth becomes the Penobscot river system. The event that ensues is of importance to us. The people below who are dying of thirst at once rush to the water as it flows by. Some of them are so eager to drink that they plunge into the stream and are forthwith transformed into various fish, batrachians, and marine animals. Those who restrain themselves from the water escape transformation and become the ancestors of the human families. These, however, assume the names and to a certain extent the identity of the particular animal into which their nearest relatives were transformed. Furthermore, they seem to have chosen their habitat near the places inhabited by their animal relatives. So we find those families with marine animal associations occupying hunting territories near the sea. Moreover, these families subsisted largely upon the flesh of the animal with which they are associated. Certain physical peculiarities are also attributed to the mythical relationship between the present day human and animal families. To illustrate this, we find the Lobster and Crab families with territories

restricted to lower Penobscot bay, and the Sculpin and Sturgeon families further up along the river. The former were notable as seafaring people and subsisted chiefly upon sea food. The members of the Whale family are still looked upon as being very large and dark colored people. As regards the rest of the families having land animal associations, their origins are varied too much to be dealt with here. Some claimed descent from an ancestor who had lived with the associated animal, others through some pseudo-historical event concerned with the creature, while some others are thought merely to have taken an animal name from some particular species which abounded in their hunting territory.

Generalizing somewhat from my studies, which are treated in full in a work on the ethnology of the tribe, we find that the Penobscot families all had animal names, with descent in the male line. There were no taboos against killing the associated animal, which to a certain degree was depended upon for food. The term *ntú'tem* "my spouse's parents," or in another sense "my partner of a strange race," was frequently used in reference to the animal, which after all is to be classified in the category of a totem. The family totemic groups included those related by blood, by marriage, or by adoption. But no regular exogamy prevailed, because family identity was rather loose. The direction of marriage was largely arbitrary in the bands.

The following list gives the totemic names of the Penobscot families, in the order of their location from the coast inland: Lobster, Crab, Sculpin, Eel, Bear, Toad, Insect, Fisher, Whale, Beaver, Sturgeon, Wolf, Frog, Squirrel, Raccoon, Wolverine, Water Nymph (a human-like fairy), Otter, Lynx, Rabbit, Yellow Perch, and Raven. Those highest in social rank were the Bear and Squirrel from which the chief of the families having land animal totems was chosen, and the Frog and Sturgeon from which the other side chose their chief. In a certain sense the totems were regarded as family emblems. Pictorial representations of them were used to mark the boundaries of the hunting territories. The families had their totems blazed upon trees along boundary rivers or employed figures cut out of birchbark as line marks.

Resolving our data to what might seem to be a reasonable conclusion, it appears that the usual Algonkian family unit concept has in the case of the Penobscot been developed along some independent lines. Some special influences seem to have caused an emphasis of the economic aspect of totemism, which is here apparently of a secondary nature. A nascent clan organization seems to be in evidence. Nowhere else do we meet with quite the same thing. Finally it hardly seems necessary to add that the social structure of the Penobscot has been obsolete for about fifty years. The territories extended from the coast northward into the interior as far as the St John's river, those in the northern interior being of a much greater size than those nearer Moosehead lake, Penobscot river, and the coast. The latter average about five hundred square miles, while to the northeast they are often twice that extent. We might be tempted to infer from this that the Penobscot migration drifted southeast originally.

Regarding the Passamaquoddy of the eastern coast of Maine, my material, as yet incomplete, only permits me to state that the economic phenomena resemble those of the Penobscot. The Malecite of St John's river had their hunting territories too, but I am not prepared to give them yet. Here, however, we learn that personal nicknames were often derived from the animals most commonly hunted by individuals.

#### MICMAC

Lastly, as regards the Micmac of the extreme east, inhabiting the maritime provinces of Canada, and Newfoundland, we find the data to be much less complex in character though no less fraught with ethnological importance. While my surveys in this region are as yet by no means complete, they already cover Newfoundland, Cape Breton island, and parts of Nova Scotia. The general characteristics of the family territories of the Micmac are fairly uniform, differing considerably from those of the Penobscot, despite the fact that both tribes belong to the same Algonkian subdivision.

The Micmac term their hunting territories *ntuyel'wâmi*, "hunting area." The districts themselves generally surround lakes, ponds, or

sections of rivers, few being at any distance from water. The bounds do not seem to be as strictly defined as among the Ojibwa, Montagnais, and Algonkin, nor does resentment against trespassing amount to much. In the old days the families ordinarily spent the summer in villages located near the seacoast, and retired in the fall to their proper hunting claims, where they had temporary camps at convenient intervals. There were no clans, no regulations of exogamy, and no group totemism. In this unelaborate social scheme we find even no remembrance of groupings of any kind under names. The immediate members of the family constitute the family group with its inherited hunting territory. These tracts, as a rule, remain intact as long as there are sons, grandsons, or nephews in the male line to hold them. Nevertheless, gradual changes are taking place as the districts may become subdivided in part among male heirs, and, as sometimes happens, they may be augmented by the addition of adjacent lots through intermarriage with other families or inheritance from distant relatives. Parts of territories are, again, occasionally bestowed as rewards upon friends for important services, such as supporting the aged or raising adopted children. The families themselves, as the simplest kind of social units, form villages which seem to have some individual identity under local names. These exist nowadays as reservations, constituting small bands. Related and neighboring smaller bands in turn comprise the larger bands, determined more or less by geographical features, known as the Micmac of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward island, Cape Breton island, and Newfoundland, respectively. Each village has its chief and each band has its head chief while the whole nation is represented by a hereditary life chief whose headquarters are at Cape Breton.

I mention these political points showing the relationship of the different bands in order to introduce another relatively important problem of migration which our study of Micmac hunting territories throws some light upon. By comparing the size of the family hunting districts in the various divisions of the tribe we discover that the further eastward we go the larger the family tracts are. Those in Newfoundland, where there are thirteen family groups.



average about two thousand square miles to each, while in Cape Breton the sixteen family groups have an average of about four hundred square miles apiece, and in Nova Scotia the average district amounts to only about two hundred square miles. In its ultimate significance this comparison would seem to indicate that, in contiguous regions inhabited by branches of the same tribe, the country where the family territories are the largest is the country most recently occupied in the advancing frontier of the tribe. Hence, Nova Scotia was doubtless the center of distribution of the southern and eastern Micmac whose line of migration has been continuously eastward, reaching Newfoundland within the last two hundred and fifty years by approximate estimate. This inference is also supported by ethnological and historical material, obtained from the bands themselves, which I have treated in a more special article,<sup>1</sup> and from which I have quoted a little here.

#### CONCLUSION

A still more important conclusion may, I believe, be drawn from this material, incomplete as it is yet. It confirms the idea that the earliest fundamental social unit of the Algonkian was the consanguineous family. In the north and east under fairly isolated conditions the family unit has remained most characteristic, but among the central and southern divisions of the stock a borrowed clan system has been superimposed upon the simpler family grouping. This seems to offer an explanation for the existence of the more complex clan and totemic organization found among the Algonkian adjacent to the Iroquois and other more typically southern phases of culture where the clan system predominates. Moreover the uninterrupted prevalence of the family unit and the corresponding absence of the clan system among most of the tribes inhabiting the lateral zone just north of the Great Lakes and the St Lawrence is a very strong indication favoring the supposition that this general region may conservatively be considered the home of Algonkian institutions whether or not it be an old center of distribution of the stock. The absence of definite clans, the family social group or

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<sup>1</sup> "Family Hunting Territories of the Micmac-Montagnais of Newfoundland," *MS. in press, Geological Survey of Canada.*

band, and the lineal system of relationship seem to go together in the same stage of nomadic hunting culture and to be fundamentally typical of an old Algonkian social period, which has survived with fewer modifications among the tribes of the northern and north-eastern group.

I hope later to extend the region covered by my territorial survey so that as many as possible of the contiguous boundaries of all the northern and northeastern tribes may be marked down. Then we shall be able to give actual boundaries not only to tribal groups but to dialects and to the distribution of elements of culture. This material, may, moreover, prove to have some value in the field of Indian administration should it ever be possible to reconstruct the boundaries of the Indian family claims in Ontario and Quebec. It becomes apparent by means of our study how, through misunderstanding between the colonial authorities and the natives, large tracts of land were sold by chiefs or by individuals who, from the Indian standpoint, had absolutely no claim to their ownership nor rights of disposal. We have also found out how this topic of ethnology, recently brought to light as a field of research, may enable us to trace the trend of migration in certain groups of American culture, besides furnishing us with material illustrating the gradation in social complexity from the simplest family kinship group to the totemic clan groups within the same stock. It is to be hoped that in the future ethnologists working in the field will enter this topic upon their programs of investigation.

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